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**KALC Chief Executive Bulletin – Issue 21 (July 2021)**

Dear Member Councils

Welcome to the July edition of my Bulletin. Hope you are all staying safe and well.

* **Prime Minister’s statement on Coronavirus:** Last week the Prime Minister gave a statement on coronavirus and confirmed: On 19 July, most legal restrictions will end, removing social distancing and social contact restrictions and enabling business to reopen; By the end of July, the government will publish an updated Covid-19 contain outbreak management framework for local areas; On 16 August, the rules on self-isolating as a contact will change for people who are fully vaccinated and for under 18s; In September, the government will undertake a review to assess the country’s preparedness for autumn and winter, which will consider whether to continue or strengthen public and business guidance. The Prime Minister urged the public to remain vigilant and exercise caution. The statement can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-confirms-move-to-step-4>. Moving to step 4 of the roadmap can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap>. Guidance on what you can and cannot do can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>. Guidance on returning to holding face-to-face meetings. Guidance on working safely during Covid-19 as part of Step 4 of the Roadmap can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19>. Please also visit the NALC Coronavirus webpage at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/coronavirus-page> for further advice.
* **Operation Brock** – As you may have already seen in the local media, the concrete barrier on the M20 between Junctions 8 and 9 was being put back in place over the weekend ready for today (Monday 19 July), with the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. For further details please see the KCC media release - [KRF to bring back Brock to help keep Kent moving - KCC Media Hub](https://kccmediahub.net/krf-to-bring-back-brock-to-help-keep-kent-moving745).
* **A joint statement agreed by Civility and Respect Project Working Group:** NALC, county associations of local councils and One Voice Wales (OVW), as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) as the professional body for clerks, are committed to working together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers and staff. The Joint Statement can be viewed at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1788-joint-statement-agreed-by-civility-and-respect-project-working-group>
* **Improving Standards and Embedding Good Governance:** There is currently a petition on the UK Government and Parliament website calling for Government to legislate to enable councillors to be disqualified or suspended for poor conduct**,**which you may want to consider - see [Legislate to enable Councillors to be disqualified or suspended for poor conduct - Petitions (parliament.uk)](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/586143).
* **2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies: As highlighted in the 8 June Local Government Bulletin,** the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) has published its initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. BCE has produced a partner pack and anyone can respond to the consultation **which closes on 2 August**. The proposals include increasing the number of parliamentary constituencies in Kent from 17 to 18. For further details please visit: <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/>
* **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) survey on rural network coverage (mobile):** DCMS are currently researching the impact of mobile coverage in rural areas. This is part of their Shared Rural Network programme which aims to increase mobile network coverage across the UK to 95%. Now, they want to find out how this programme can help **you** in your daily life. They want particularly to hear from you if you live or work in rural UK! **You can participate via this link**: <https://dcms.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7QWTy9OUU4PNnmK>, or email [Laura.Hensel@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Hensel@dcms.gov.uk) to request to complete the survey over the telephone.
* **AGAR 2020/2021:** We have been advised by PKF Littlejohn that some councilshave not yet submitted their AGAR form (deadline was 2 July). If your council has not yet submitted its AGAR, we would encourage you to do so as soon as possible and to also contact PKF Littlejohn to let them know when you will be sending it – e-mail [SBA@pkf-l.com](mailto:SBA@pkf-l.com).
* **Litter Motion and Petition:** KALC has been made aware of a Petition on the UK Government and Parliament website calling for mandatory printing of car registration numbers on all Drive Thru packaging, which has been signed by over 59,000 people. If the Petition has 100,000 signatures it will be considered for debate in Parliament – see [petition](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/580772?fbclid=IwAR3or-1licyDK2gs9ohrc7Jb36vcmcQA4DzyLTRKU0-OwFAV7l_bxH2NdyI).
* **Lower Thames Crossing Community Impacts Consultation: Highways England is holding a further round of public consultation to seek views on:**
* Our plans to build and operate the Lower Thames Crossing and how we will mitigate its impact
* Changes to the project since the design refinement consultation in 2020
* How responses received at each of our previous consultations have informed the development of the project

For further details please see [Lower Thames Crossing consultation](https://ltcconsultation.highwaysengland.co.uk/?_cldee=bHRjQHJpY2hkLnN1cmZvbndhdGVyLmNvbQ%3D%3D&recipientid=contact-566e9882cf09e71180fb5065f38a1b01-81d4ee21d2434906925c81fca1ade1c9&esid=404b5bff-76dd-eb11-bacb-0022483f885b). The consultation deadline is 23:59 on 8 September 2021.

* **Parish Councillors Guide to Rural Affordable Housing:** On 5 July, English Rural launched their new guide (Parish Councillors’ Guide to Rural Affordable Housing) aimed at local (parish and town) councillors on affordable rural housing. For further details, please see <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1792-english-rural-launch-a-new-guide-on-rural-housing-for-councillors>.
* **Guidance on Transparency requirements for publishing on Contracts Finder**: For further details please see -

[2021-06-22\_Guidance\_on\_transparency\_requirements\_for\_publishing\_on\_Contracts\_Finder-\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/996536/2021-06-22_Guidance_on_transparency_requirements_for_publishing_on_Contracts_Finder-_Final.pdf)

* **Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act** – Towards the end of June, the Home Office updated its guidance on the powers that the police, local authorities and other local agencies can use to tackle anti-social behaviour. For further details, please see - [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act: anti-social behaviour - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-policing-bill-anti-social-behaviour).
* **Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan Consultation:** Kent County Council is currently consulting on its Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan. KCC want to ensure that their Improvement Plan reflects the views of Kent residents and want to hear from users and residents about what would make bus travel more attractive.  For further details please see [https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/busfuture](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fletstalk.kent.gov.uk%2Fbusfuture&data=04%7C01%7CClare.Ellen%40kent.gov.uk%7C57923c6224614709b7cd08d93d4728ae%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C0%7C637608198267213793%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=7tEgvIz4DLMCMh9J3ehy6Qflov1HCpKeJbVHeoI2XnY%3D&reserved=0). **The closing date is 29 August.**
* **National Transport and Highways Survey 2021/2022:** Councils across the UK are asking residents to tell them what they think of transport and highways services in their area, and we're one of those councils. There are six independent surveys in total - feel free to take one or all of them. Apparently, each survey will only take a few minutes of your time. They are asking for your views on: accessibility; highways maintenance; public transport; road safety; tackling congestion; walking and cycling. For further details see - [National Highways and Transport Survey 2021/22 | Let’s talk Kent](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/national-highways-and-transport-survey-2021-22). **The survey deadline is 28 February 2022.**
* **Cantium/EIS Kentparishes.gov.uk website:** As highlighted in May,the Cantium/EIS[kentparishes.gov.uk](http://kentparishes.gov.uk) website ceased after 31 May. If your Council now has a new website, please remember to inform your District/Borough Council so that they can update their website with your new website address.
* **Upcoming KALC Online Training:** We are delighted to highlight the following L&D online events using Zoom – please visit [www.kentalc.gov.uk](http://www.kentalc.gov.uk) for further details:
* 20 July – **Cyber Security for Local Councils**
* 27 July – **Managing your H&S risks and liabilities – an overview for Local Councils**
* 5 August– **Clerks Networking Event** (pilot event for clerks in the Canterbury area)
* 2 September – **Dynamic Councillor Workshop**
* 9 September– **Data Protection for Councillors**
* 28 September – **Annual Clerks Conference**
* 29th September – **Public Speaking Skills for Councillors**
* 9 October - **An Introduction to Project Management**
* 14 October - **Data Protection for Clerks and Officers**
* 19 October - **Freedom of Information Skills for Local Councils**
* 20 October – **Annual Finance Conference**

Terry Martin

Chief Executive